DEMOCRATIC
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NO A-BOMB IN EAST

There are no A-bombs stationed in East Germany, it was officially announced in Berlin on May 5th.

The official announcement was made by Prime Minister Otto Grotewohl at a meeting with the most distinguished atomic research experts of the German Democratic Republic. The Prime Minister stated: "No atomic weapons are situated in the German Democratic Republic; none are being produced here; there will be no change in this situation in the future."

At the meeting the Prime Minister appealed once again for an East-West German agreement on the renunciation of all atomic weapons.

Following the meeting with the Prime Minister and other leading political figures, fourteen of Democratic Germany's leading atomic scientists issued a declaration stating categorically that no scientist in the Republic had ever been asked to work on problems connected with the making or testing of atomic weapons.

The declaration stated in part: "Nobody has more right than we Germans to oppose the threatening fate, since our entire homeland would fall victim to an atomic war. The release of atomic energy for peaceful purposes would mean such a great step forward in the development of mankind all efforts must be devoted to this end."

The declaration was signed by fourteen professors, including Nobel Prize winner Professor Gustav Hertz; Professor Walter Friedrich, the founder of the science of bio-physics; and Professor Alfred Eckardt, leading physicist and concentration camp veteran.

Adenauer Warned on A-Bombs

The Soviet Union has warned West Germany that the arming of the West German Wehrmacht with atomic weapons will inevitably lead to an atom arms race in Europe, and would end hopes of German reunification.

The warning was given in an official note from the Soviet Government of the German Federal Republic on April 27th. The main points in the warning were:

1. West Germany is the only European state which has called for the revision of present frontiers, and its arming with atomic weapons would greatly increase the danger of war.

2. West German atomic arming would unleash an atomic arms race in Europe, since European states overrun by Germany in the past would take counter-measures.

3. In the case of atomic warfare, the heaviest blow would undoubtedly fall on West Germany, which would be converted into a cemetery.

4. Atomic arming would constitute an irreparable blow to German reunification.

5. The Soviet Union is ready to conclude an agreement with the western powers not to station atomic weapons on German soil.

The Soviet warning to West Germany was complemented by a note sent by the Government of the German Democratic Republic on April 30th to the Government of the German Federal Republic, underlining the dangers of atomic armament, and repeating the offer often made in the past to negotiate with West Germany for an agreement that no atomic weapons should be made or stationed in either part of Germany.

The West German Government refused to accept the note from the German Democratic Republic. A summary of the main points of the notes sent by the Soviet Government and the Government of the German Democratic Republic is given below.

West German official reaction to the Soviet note was very cool. Dr Heinrich von Brentano, West German Foreign Minister, told journalists on April 29th that the West German Government regarded the Soviet note as "an unprecedented intervention in the internal affairs of a sovereign state" and as a "massive threat aimed at driving a wedge between the German Federal Republic and its allies." *(cont. on next page)*

(cont. from preceding page)

Adenauer Warned on A-Bombs

Dr von Brentano claimed that the Federal Republic had no intention of arming its Wehrmacht with atomic weapons. In making this claim, the Foreign Minister directly contradicted Chancellor Adenauer, who announced publicly on April 5th that atomic armament was intended, and suggested in addition that the Federal Republic would be armed with H-bombs "one day".

Reaction to the Soviet note in West German Social Democratic circles was quite different. Wilhelm Mellies, foreign affairs expert of the Social Democratic Party stated: "This note is a proof of the steadily rising tension in the world. Everything which this note has to say about the atomic danger is true, and is a confirmation of our political line. If there is not a decisive change of course in the next year or two, then we shall be marching with open eyes towards a third world war."

Here are the main points of the Soviet note addressed to the Government of the (West) German Federal Republic on April 27th:

"Government representatives of the Federal Republic have recently made a number of declarations showing that the Government of the German Federal Republic has the intention of arming the West German forces with atomic weapons. The extremely dangerous character of such a step is underlined by the fact that the territory of the Federal Republic is already used by the western powers for stationing atomic weapons ... This will lead to the conversion of the Federal Republic into the main European mobilisation area for the main striking force of NATO for atomic warfare in Europe.

"It is easy to understand that all such measures awaken the anxiety of the peoples of Europe. This anxiety is shared by the population of the Federal Republic; this is shown by the fact that large political parties, public organisations, and famed scientists of the Federal Republic have opposed the stationing of foreign atomic weapons on the territory of the Federal Republic.

"The basis of this anxiety is easily understood if one imagines the results which such plans ... would have for the German people, for Germany's neighbours, and for Europe as a whole.

"The German Federal Republic is the only European state the government of which demands a revision of the frontiers now existing in Europe, and there can be no doubt that arming the military forces of the Federal Republic with atomic weapons would rapidly sharpen the international tension in our continent, and would sharpen the danger of war.

"The security of the states neighbouring on Germany would be endangered. It is easy to visualise how these states, which in the past have repeatedly been exposed to attacks by Germany, will react to the atomic arming of the Federal Republic. These European states would naturally be forced to take the necessary measures to strengthen their defences.

"By its action the German Federal Republic would thus unleash an atomic arms race in Europe ...

"One can only agree with those circles in the Federal Republic who believe that such a step ... at the time when the powers are conferring on disarmament, is in practice an attempt to wreck a disarmament agreement.

"The atomic arming policy of the Federal Republic is claimed to be motivated by the fact that it is necessary for the security of the country. Such claims do not coincide with the real situation. Instead of working for a decrease in international tension, disarmament, and the banning of weapons of mass destruction, the Federal Republic is seeking security on the basis of the 'policy of strength'. But arming the West German forces with atomic weapons, and converting the Federal Republic into a launching base for American atom missiles will not increase the security of the Federal Republic; on the contrary it will expose the Federal Republic and its population to a dreadful danger, far worse than anything which Germany has experienced in the past.

"Today, twelve years after the end of the Second World War, the wounds of war are not yet healed in Germany. Ruins in many German cities testify to the catastrophe. In the last war, however, only conventional weapons were used. It is quite obvious that the conversion of the Federal Republic into a NATO atomic base will mean that in case of war West Germany will immediately fall victim to a counter blow, delivered by all varieties of new weapons, including atomic weapons. It is not necessary to explain in detail the results that this would have for the population and the economy of the Federal Republic, an area in which population and industry are so concentrated that the vital centres of the country could be paralysed by one single H-bomb.

„It is also obvious that no help from outside ... could save the Federal Republic from these serious consequences. What use could such help be to the population of the Federal Republic, even if it could be given? It is not difficult to visualise the results: if atomic weapons were to be used, the heaviest and most concentrated attacks with these weapons would undoubtedly fall on West Germany, which would be converted into a cemetery.

"Atom bombs and H-bombs, by their very nature, make the hope for outside help in an atomic war baseless. In view of these facts would it

Two Cheers for Lord Beaverbrook

***GERMAN REPORT** rarely agrees with the London "Daily Express", organ of press lord Beaverbrook. On April 29th, however, the "Daily Express" published a leading article with which we thoroughly agree, and which we reprint in full below. N. B. for "Germany" read "West Germany" throughout.*

An historic incident occurs this week. The Nato council gathers in Bonn for its first meeting in Germany.

The event illustrates the ominous extent to which Germany has penetrated Nato. Already a German officer, General Speidel, commands the Western allies' armies.

Germany is rearming even faster after Hitler's war than she did after the Kaiser's. German divisions are multiplying. The Luftwaffe is re-forming with jets. And guided missiles with atomic warheads are in prospect.

All this is meant for the security of Nato. But in Britain these developments arouse deep misgivings.

The rearming of Germany is a foolhardy policy. It should never have been sanctioned.

not be better ... to cease playing with fire. The Soviet Government finds it necessary to state that it would be a great mistake to regard this declaration as a threat to the Federal Republic. The Soviet Government does not utilise the method of threats and intimidation. The Soviet Government declares categorically that this note, and preceding notes, are not dictated by the wish to intimidate anyone, but solely by the wish to draw attention to the real situation in Europe at present.

"It is public knowledge that the main principle of the foreign policy of the Soviet Union is the principle of peaceful coexistence and friendly cooperation of all states on the basis of mutual respect for sovereignty and non-intervention in internal affairs. The Government of the Soviet Union abides by these principles in its relations with the German Federal Republic. Since, however, the Federal Government takes steps which endanger the peace and security of the peoples of Europe, the Soviet Government regards it as necessary to draw public attention to the danger facing the Federal Republic if it takes the path leading to atomic armament ... This is a question of life or death for the Federal Republic.

"As is well known, representatives of government circles in the Federal Republic speak of the so-called tactical atomic weapons, which are said to be simply improved artillery, and the inclusion of which in the armoury is claimed to represent no danger to the Federal Republic. This way of putting the problem is very far-fetched. It is not by chance that attention has been drawn to the fact that modern so-called tactical atomic weapons have the same destructive power as the atom bombs which were dropped on Nagasaki and Hiroshima. It should also not be overlooked that the use of the so-called tactical atomic weapons would inevitably lead to the use of all atomic weapons with their appalling destructive power. The talk about 'tactical' atomic weapons is obviously designed to foster illusions amongst the people of the Federal Republic that the effects of the atomic war preparations can be avoided, and to create the impression that the atomic armament of the Federal Republic is inevitable and constitutes a sort of natural process.

"The effects of arming the West German forces with atomic weapons upon the restoration of German unity cannot be overlooked. The Federal Government's policy of remilitarisation, of participation in aggressive military blocks, of suppressing democratic liberties, and of ignoring the real situation which has arisen in Germany all constitute formidable obstacles to the unification of Germany; but the equipment of the West German army with atomic weapons ... would deal an irreparable blow to the national reunification of the German people. Would it be possible to speak seriously about the unification of Germany if atomic barriers had been erected along the line which today divides Germany into two states?

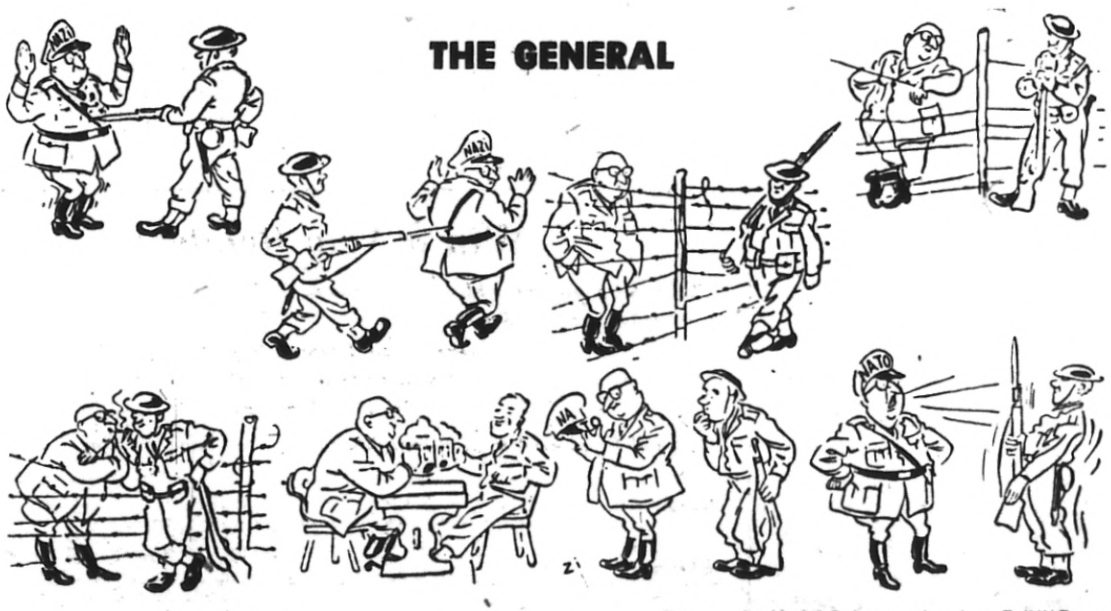
"The course of atomic armament ... cannot be reconciled with the restoration of German unity, and those statesmen of the Federal Republic who today take this course are incurring a particularly heavy responsibility vis-a-vis the German people.

"The Soviet Government also believes that the policy of atomic armament of the Federal Republic ... is contrary to the interests of an improvement in the relations between the Federal Republic and the Soviet Union ...

"The Federal Government is undoubtedly aware that the Soviet Union is making great efforts to reach agreement between the powers on practical disarmament measures, and particularly measures to avoid the danger of atomic war. The Soviet Government believes that no state should act in a way which makes the solution of this problem more difficult.

"It would be difficult to find any state which has such an interest in disarmament and the banning of atomic weapons as Germany. It is a fact that German territory has today become the scene of a quite abnormal peace-time concentration of forces and war materials from nations which are participants in different military groupings. In view of this fact the Soviet Government believes that no step should be taken which has the slightest additional complicating effect on the present situation in central Europe: on the contrary, everything must be done to relax tension and normalise the situation in this area.

"As is well known the Soviet Government has proposed to the western powers that the forces of the USA,



Drawing by Herluf Bidstrup, "Land og Folk" Copenhagen

USSR, Britain and France stationed in Germany should be reduced by one third this year. Another proposal made by the Soviet Government should be mentioned: this is the proposal to liquidate all military, naval and air bases on foreign territory.

"The Government of the USSR gives its unlimited support to the proposal of the German Democratic Republic that no atom weapons at all, either foreign or German, should be stationed on German soil. If this proposal were put into effect it would improve the whole political situation in Europe, and could preserve the German people from the danger of atomic warfare. The Soviet Government, for its part, is ready to conclude an agreement with the western powers not to station atomic weapons on German soil. It need not be emphasised that a positive attitude by the Federal Republic towards this proposal would be helpful in achieving such an agreement.

"The Soviet Government is convinced that the Government of the German Federal Republic could make a great contribution to the fine cause of banning the danger of atomic war and helping to relax international tension . . ."

Here are the main points of the note sent by the Government of the German Democratic Republic to the Government of the German Federal Republic on April 30th:

"In view of the meeting in Bonn on May 2nd of the Council of Ministers of the North Atlantic Pact Organisation, the Government of the German Democratic Republic believes it necessary to define its standpoint towards the question of the atomic armament of West Germany, and to call on the Government of the German Federal Republic . . . to take a stand at this meeting against the stationing of atom weapons and munitions in West Germany and against the armament of the Federal Army with such weapons.

"At the moment the Government of the German Federal Republic is making every effort to equip the Federal Army with atomic weapons, despite public declarations to the contrary. It has also become known that business and military circles close to the government have plans to begin producing atomic weapons in West Germany . . .

"The atomic armament of the German Federal Republic would so heighten the barriers to reunification . . . that there would be even less hope for a union of the two German states. How can a peaceful reunification of Germany even be contemplated if the German Federal Republic is converted into a centre for atomic war, and if Germany becomes the deployment area in which atomic forces confront one another? . . .

"If the Government of the German Federal Republic were to request the USA to liquidate its atomic bases in West Germany, this would be an effective step towards barring the danger of atomic warfare.

"In this connection the Government of the German Democratic Republic recalls its proposals:

No stationing of foreign weapons of mass destruction on German soil;

Rejection of the arming of the forces of the two German states with atomic weapons, or the production of such weapons in Germany.

"These proposals accord with the vital interests of our people, and should finally be put into practice. The Government of the German Democratic Republic is ready at any time to conclude an agreement on these points."

Bishops Back Ban

All Evangelical bishops in East Germany have signed an appeal for the abolition of the A-bomb and all mass destruction weapons. The appeal was drafted by the deans of the six theological faculties of the universities of the German Democratic Republic. Among the signatories was Dr Dibelius, Bishop of Berlin and the surrounding province of Brandenburg, and senior Protestant churchman in the whole of Germany.

Rumania, Democratic Germany Increase Co-operation

The Rumanian People's Republic and the German Democratic Republic will in future increase their cooperation in all economic, political and cultural fields, and will soon conclude a new long-term trade agreement.

These were the main points of a joint communique issued in Berlin on April 28th, at the conclusion of a four day visit to the German Democratic Republic by a Rumanian government delegation led by Chivu Stoica, Rumanian Prime Minister, and Gheorghe Gheorgiu-Dej, First Secretary of the Rumanian Workers' Party.

In the joint communique the two sides stressed their opposition to the Western European "Common Market" and Euratom pacts, and to the aggressive policy being followed by the NATO powers, and called for a ban on the production and use of atomic weapons. The two governments expressed their support for the plan to create a zone of limited armaments in central Europe which could constitute a useful step towards the establishment of a European Security Pact.

The communique stated that negotiations would soon begin between the two countries for the conclusion of a long-term trade agreement for the years 1958—1960. The two countries will greatly extend their economic and technical cooperation, particularly in the chemical industry, valuable raw materials for which are available in both countries.

A communique issued simultaneously by the delegates of the Rumanian Workers' Party and the Socialist Unity Party of Germany expressed joint determination to "Strengthen the unity of the socialist camp headed by the Soviet Union" and to "guard the purity of Marxist-Leninist teachings".

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OUTRAGE MARKS HITLER BIRTHDAY

Neo-Nazis Wreck Cemetery

West German neo-nazis marked Hitler's birthday on April 20th by smashing up a Jewish cemetery in the little town of Salzgitter. Eighty grave stones in the cemetery were knocked down, and a life-sized dummy was hung in the centre of the cemetery, decorated with a swastika-covered placard inscribed "Germany Awake — Perish Israel". The lettering on the placard had been done by a skilled display artist, police concluded, and the desecration must have been carried out by a number of persons working hard for some hours.

In the cemetery are buried 120 Jewish men, women and children, and several hundred non-Jewish slave workers who perished in nazi concentration camps in the Salzgitter area.

News of the latest cemetery desecration — more than two thousand such anti-Semitic excesses have been officially reported in West Germany since the end of the war — brought immediate protests from local trade union organisations and political parties. Public protests forced West German Minister of the Interior Gerhard Schroeder, himself a former nazi storm trooper, to offer a reward of 10,000 marks for information leading to the arrest of the criminals. Officials of the Ministry of the Interior tried to cloud the issue by claiming that the desecration might have been carried out by Communists.

Dr van Damm, General Secretary of the West German Central Jewish Council suggested that the real reason for this and similar anti-Semitic manifestations lay in the fact that the West German police force is largely staffed with former nazis. Dr van Damm stated: "The desecration of the Jewish cemetery at Salzgitter is not an isolated occurrence. For years we have had constant reports of activities of this sort. Attempts are continually being made to suggest that these acts are isolated actions by irresponsible persons, or playful acts by young people. After the events in Salzgitter it is not possible to throw dust in our eyes in this way. There seem to be two alternative explanations: either the German people are possessed by an incurable urge to desecrate Jewish graveyards, or the police force, which is largely staffed with former National Socialists, is not doing enough to combat such activities.

"Tell the chief of police immediately that a gang is smashing the grave stones in the Jewish cemetery across the street!"
"Sorry, but the chief is an old storm trooper, and he is over there giving a hand."
(from "Berliner Zeitung", East Berlin)

"In the past (during the Weimar Republic, ed.) we had the experience that the police were extremely lukewarm in combatting such crimes as the slandering of the Republican flag and democratic politicians, and in tracking down the persons who murdered Walther Rathenau. Is this macabre scene going to be repeated? What value can we place in the long run on the declarations of senior politicians if the police put the blame for cemetery desecrations on young people, to whom, after all, the future belongs. We can hope for no change as long as such activities, which are an attack on the security and the honour of the German people, are regarded as a bagatelle."

West German Party Wants to "Reconquer" East

The West German Refugee Party, usually known by its initials BHE, is fighting the West German general elections on the slogan: "Germany stretches from the Saar to the Memel", and calling for the reconquest of all territory held by Hitlerite Germany in 1939, including the Sudeten areas, forming about one fifth of the total territory of Czechoslovakia.

The huge territory demanded by BHE includes in addition large parts of Poland and the Soviet Union. Memel, the furthest point included in this demand, lies nearly 400 miles east of the present eastern frontier of German.

In the last West German general elections in 1953, the BHE received about 6 % of the total vote. Political observers do not expect the party to be more successful in the general elections scheduled for September, but they expect the huge territorial claims of the BHE to have the effect of forcing some other parties to make similar claims in order to avoid losing the votes of nationalistically inclined supporters.

Wehrmacht Has 1100 Tanks

The new West German Wehrmacht is already equipped with more than 1100 American M 47 tanks, it was officially announced in Bonn. This is sufficient to equip five panzer divisions now being raised, it was stated.

The official announcement added that by 1961 the West German Wehrmacht would have a total of 9000 tanks. At the same ratio of armament this would be sufficient to equip more than 40 Panzer divisions: the Paris Agreement on West German rearmament laid down a top limit of twelve divisions for the new Wehrmacht.

THE BATTLE FOR COAL

Fuel Basis Secure by 1962

The battle to increase the production of coal and electric power were the main problems confronting the industry of the German Democratic Republic, Plan Commission Chairman Bruno Leuschner told the People's Chamber of the German Democratic Republic on April 26th.

Herr Leuschner, who is also Deputy Prime Minister, was announcing the details of the economic plan for 1957. More than one quarter of all investments made during the current year would be devoted to the expansion of coal and power production, he announced. By increasing the investments it should be possible to increase the production of soft coal, East Germany's main fuel, by more than 10 million tons this year, he stated. Last year East Germany, which is the largest producer of soft coal in the world, mined more than 205 million tons.

Concentration upon coal and power production would make it possible to raise total production of soft coal to the gigantic figure of 268 million tons by 1962, Herr Leuschner forecast. "This will provide us with a fuel basis which will give us more freedom of action, and will give us a certain guarantee for the progressive development of our entire industry" he said. A simultaneous big programme of power station building and expansion would mean that by 1960 the power stations of the German Democratic Republic were producing 41,500 million kilowatt hours annually. If this project is fulfilled, it will mean that power production per head is considerably higher than in West Germany.

Here are other points from Herr Leuschner's speech:

1. Industrial production will be increased by six percent in the current year, bringing a 3,000 million mark increase in the national income. One third of this total increase will go to old age pensioners, whose pensions were greatly increased at the end of 1956.

2. Total investments in 1957 will increase from 9,200 million to 10,400 million marks. 27 % of the investment sum will be devoted to the coal and power programme.

3. The housing programme will be greatly speeded up in 1957. A 62 % increase in building expenditure will bring the total housing bill to 2000 million marks in the current year.

4. Imports in 1957 will increase by almost one quarter. The increase is largely made possible by a large credit granted by the Soviet Union.

5. The question of finally ending food rationing, originally foreseen for this year, "will be dealt with in the period of the Second Five Year Plan (1956—1960). This question can only be finally solved when we are quite certain that there will be no difficulties in supplies, or other disadvantages for the population."

6. Expenditure on the health services will increase still further. In the current year health expenditure will amount to 450 marks per head, compared with 300 marks per head in West Germany.

SOCIALISM BRINGS PROFITS

Well over half the budget of the German Democratic Republic is met by the profits made by socialised industry, Finance Minister Willi Rumpf announced on April 26th.

Presenting the budget for 1957 to the People's Chamber the Finance Minister disclosed that 57.9 % of the state income of 39,109 million marks came from socialist industry, and only four percent from direct taxes on wages. The budget showed a surplus of over five million marks. Big savings had been possible in the current year, owing to the fact that the contribution towards the cost of upkeep of the Soviet troops stationed in the German Democratic Republic had been halved, and now amounted to only 800 million marks. The upkeep of the People's Army cost the state 976 million marks, that is 2.9 % of the total state expenditure.

Much more money was spent on education than on the army, the Finance Minister announced. Total expenditure on education would rise in the current year by 5 % to a new high of 1428 million marks.

Left Gains in Factory Votes

Progressive workers formerly organised in the now-banned Communist Party have won many seats in works' council elections in many West German factories recently. In the big Howaldt shipyards in Kiel former members of the Communist Party won eight of 25 seats on the council; in the Gelsenkirchen Foundry five of the ten members elected to the works council were known as former Communists; in the coal mine "Fritz Heinrich" in Essen six of the 13 council members are former Communists; and in the Ewald 3/4 pit at Gelsenkirchen six of the 11 council members belonged to the banned party.

Commenting on these and similar works' council election results from other parts of West Germany, the right wing newspaper "Rheinischer Merkur" on April 18th called on the trade union leadership to "join hands with the employers in taking steps against this development".

The newspaper stated: "The first results of the works' council elections show that in most cases the former members of the banned Communist Party have been able to win as many seats as they held before their party was banned . . . In many cases a Communist candidate received the largest number of votes, and will therefore automatically become the chairman of the works' council. The democratic forces in the factories should have seen to it that these former members and activists of the Communist Party withdrew for the time being from political and trade union work. The main responsibility lies on the shoulders of the trade unions, the organised representatives of the workers. The employers must also be asked whether they have done their job as citizens of opening the eyes of their workers. The banning of the Communist Party should have shown that Communist agitation cannot be regarded as political agitation but as an attack on the democratic basic order. Perhaps these elections will finally act as a bugle call to all democratic forces amongst the trade unionists and the employers to join hands in taking steps against this development."

W. GERMAN T. U. C. MOOTS UNITY

The West German Trade Union Federation, representing over six million workers, has published a short-term programme of the steps which should be taken to prevent the two halves of Germany from growing further away from one another.

The programme, main points of which are given below, covers many fields in which agreement could be reached between the two halves of Germany without great difficulty, and without a general solution of the German problem. Political circles in East Berlin pointed out that many of the proposals made by the West German Trade Unions had repeatedly been made in the past by the Government of the German Democratic Republic; these political circles stressed, however, that it would be impossible to put such a programme into practice as long as the West German Government — and incidentally the West German trade union movement — refused to recognise the existence of the German Democratic Republic as a going concern.

Here are the main points from the West German Trade Union Federation's short-term programme:

1. Complete freedom of movement must be restored throughout Germany.

2. Exchange of ideas in word and print between the people of the Federal Republic (West Germany) and the Soviet Zone (disparaging name for the German Democratic Republic, ed.) must be improved. Unobstructed and unregimented meetings must be made possible between the population of both halves of Germany, particularly between the workers of East Germany and the trade unionists of West Germany.

3. The exchange of cultural events, such as theatrical groups, art exhibitions, concerts, sports events, films, radio and television programmes etc. is to be extended. All radio jamming is to end.

4. The exchange of schoolchildren and students is to be encouraged. Young people must be given the opportunity of getting to know conditions in both parts of Germany for themselves.

5. The unhindered exchange of literature, particularly trade union newspapers and daily newspapers is to be encouraged on the broadest basis.

6. All hindrances to passenger traffic between East and West Germany should be removed. The controls at the frontier stations, the official residence permits etc. should be abolished.

7. All transport facilities across the zonal frontier should be normalised and extended.

8. All limitations in postal communications should be done away with, and censorship should be abolished.

9. Steps should be taken in both halves of Germany to extend health insurance to visitors from the other part of the country.

London's Influential Journal "Punch" Calls:

FORWARD FROM SPEIDEL

Going too little too late is, as is widely known, one of the things that repeatedly gets us all into trouble, which is why it is none too soon to inquire just what exactly is being done to push ahead with what may be called the Speidel Situation at a proper rate of speed.

This is no time for complacency.

No one would deny that the placing of British troops on the European continent under the command of a seasoned German officer, and the spectacle of a French military band playing Deutschland über alles in his honour, were matters for justifiable satisfaction. Everyone could see that progress was being made.

But it must be frankly admitted that in many quarters there has been a tendency to behave as though all reasonable objectives had now been achieved, to relax with the comfortable conviction that once a genuine German has been put in charge of the Franco-British forces peace and goodwill are assured.

To do so is sadly to underestimate the demands which the international situation makes of us.

It was, or should have been, obvious at the outset that to make such an arrangement unilaterally must be bound to produce serious repercussions in, for instance, Tokio. And this is what has now occurred.

To a proud and sensitive people like the Japanese, acutely conscious as they are of their place in the van of civilization, it is clearly intolerable that in the year 1957 no single Japanese officer is in command of any sizable body of British or French troops anywhere. It is a slur not only on the reputation of the Japanese as the "peacemakers of Asia" but also on the Japanese Army. Is it suggested that among those who so ably conducted the invasion of, for instance, Burma, there are not commanders at least as well qualified as those who gained their experience under Wilhelm II and Adolf Hitler?

To argue that there are not sufficient British or French forces within easy reach of Japan to make it worth a Japanese general's while to command them is a mere quibble. At this moment the governorship of Hongkong is in the hands of a British subject — a circumstance which has already given rise to sharp and, it is to be feared, wellgrounded criticism by members of the Afro-Asian bloc.

The least that should be done — and it is a gesture which would do much to restore our prestige in the Orient, where such gestures are highly appreciated — is to hand over the governorship with a minimum of delay to some highranking Japanese officer.

But all these measures must be regarded in the light of stopgaps.

Far more imaginative policies are required if the injured feelings of Germans, Japanese and others are to be assuaged and a climate of international goodwill created. For example, why should not some part of the Home Forces be officered by Germans?

To argue that British military organizations in these islands are already fully occupied by Americans is a mere quibble. It cannot be doubted for a moment that if the appeal were made in a proper spirit of humility, with all precautions taken to avoid wounding the susceptibilities of the United States Congress, President Eisenhower, with that flair for the generous gesture which has won him respect everywhere from Cairo to Port Said, would be prepared to sanction an arrangement for the sharing of military control in Britain between the American and German forces.

PUNCH, May 1 1957

BERLIN NOTEBOOK

By John Peet

For many decades now, German soldiers in their field grey uniforms have been a figure of fear for the peoples of Europe. Twice in living memory these soldiers have carried fire and the sword across Europe.

It is therefore not at all surprising that many people have rather uncomfortable feelings when they see German soldiers in uniform again.

I must say that is rather how I felt myself on May Day in Berlin, when the big parade of Berlin's workers was opened with a thirty-five minute parade by German soldiers — the soldiers of the People's Army of the German Democratic Republic.

Soldiers Again

I think that some of my feelings were shared by many others standing beside me on the great Marx-Engels Square, where the parade took place, and where the Kaiser's palace once stood. All around me were men and women who had spent their lives fighting against fascism and Prussian militarism, and now here we were, watching the soldiers march out again.

Of course it is easy enough to explain that it was necessary to build up this army: it would be criminal if the responsible statesmen of the German Democratic Republic did not take steps to defend the socialism which is being built here. One glimpse across the frontier to West Germany, where old nazi generals like Speidel and Heusinger are raising a Wehrmacht again, and where no day goes by without some politician calling for the "liberation of the East", is enough to show this.

Uneasiness

But still a slight feeling of uneasiness persists, rather underlined by the fact that the soldiers of the People's Army are inexplicably dressed in field-grey uniforms which resemble closely the traditional German uniform.

A Polish comrade standing next to me, a concentration camp veteran, said: "If a man dressed in that uniform came and knocked on my door early in the morning, I should probably take a header through the window before I had time to remember that this is 1957, not 1942." And he went on: "Of course I know all the perfectly valid arguments, but that is how I feel. Who is going to guarantee to me that they are not going to come marching into Poland once again?"

As it happened, I could answer him that question very precisely. I pointed to the thick-set man in general's uniform who was leading the parade, and told my Polish friend his story.

I had seen the general last in Spain in 1937. He was not dressed in a smart general's uniform then, but in the shabby, sweaty khaki shirt of a soldier of the Spanish Republican Army. On his shoulders he wore the bars of a captain, and he was commanding one of the companies of the famous Thaelmann Battalion of the International Brigade.

Major General Friedrich Dickel, as he now is, started life in the Ruhr industrial city of Wuppertal, where he worked as a caster and moulder in a foundry. For years before Hitler came to power he was unemployed, and fought in the ranks of the Comunist Party against the rising tide of nazism.

When Hitler came to power in 1933, he was arrested, like thousands of other progressive workers. After a prison term, he fled to the Saar, then on, in the wanderings of a political refugee, to Holland and France. In 1936, when Franco launched his putsch against the Spanish Republic, he hurried to Spain, and soon rose to the rank of commander in the International Brigade.

After the war in Spain ended with Franco's victory he found asylum in the Soviet Union. When he returned to Germany he immediately enlisted in the new democratic police force in East Germany as a constable. Once again his ability led to rapid promotion, and when the People's Army was formed just over one year ago, he found himself back in officer's uniform. Today he is Deputy Defence Minister. This foundry worker in uniform gives me a fair amount of confidence that the People's Army of the German Democratic Republic is never going to repeat the crimes committed by former German armies.

Another Officer

Let me just name one other officer of the new People's Army who was on parade on May Day. This was Colonel Josef Schuetz, formerly a worker in a glove factory. Josef Schuetz grew up as one of a very poor family in the German speaking area of Czechoslovakia. When Hitler occupied Czechoslovakia, Josef Schuetz found asylum in the Soviet Union, until, in 1944 he was parachuted into Slovakia to aid the Slovak partisan movement. He took part in the heroic anti-nazi rising at Banska Bystrica in August 1944, and after the defeat of the rising continued fighting as a partisan until the liberation of Czechoslovakia. In 1946 he settled in East Germany, joined the police force, and later was appointed Colonel in the People's Army. And that strengthens my confidence.

Anecdote

We have not had many anecdotes in the Notebook lately, so let me relate one, which is also about a general, but an American one this time:

A hostess in Washington was in an awful spot, because six of the guests at an important party she was throwing had let her down at the last moment. Always resourceful, she rang the local commanding general and asked him in her sweetest voice to send round six presentable smart young officers to make up the number. There was just one little thing, she said, "no Jews please". The general agreed, just as sweetly, and at the appointed time the bell rang, and in came the officers: fine smart officers, all of them Negroes. The hostess was appalled, and taking the officers aside she suggested that perhaps there might have been a mistake. "Oh no, madam", said the leading officer. "General Cohen never makes mistakes."

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